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ABSTRACT

This monograph summarizes results from academic capstone activities of graduate students and faculty advisors regarding issues consistent with Head Start national priorities and practice needs. The following theses are summarized: (1) "Multicultural Education in Head Start Programs in North Carolina" (S.K. Gant); (2) "The Impact of Head Start on Long-Term Academic Achievement" (D.R. Johnson); (3) "The Impact of Male Initiative Projects on North Carolina Head Start Programs" (G.R. Alston); (4) "An Exploration of the Collaborative Efforts among Human Service Agencies and the Head Start Program in Four Eastern North Carolina Counties" (E. Smith); (5) "An Evaluation of the Model Family Needs Assessment Instrument: Recommendations for Use in the State of North Carolina" (S.J. Shepard); (6) "An Analysis of Parent Involvement: The Impact on Head Start Families" (D.S. Lutz); (7) "An Analysis of Head Start Support Programs for Contemporary and Future Families" (D. Jackson); (8) "Increasing Social Competence in Young Children" (B.B. Sherman); (9) "Inclusion of Infants and Toddlers in Head Start Programs" (F.P. Riddick); (10) "Head Start Children and Their Academic Achievement through First Grade" (M.L. Harris); (11) "Teachers' Attitude and its Effect on Parental Participation in Head Start Programs in North Carolina" (M.F. Davis); (12) "The Knowledge and Attitudes of Head Start Staff and Parents toward Children with Blood Borne Pathogens" (G.M. Bond); (13) "Parents' Perceptions of the Parent Child Centers in North Carolina" (P.B. Banks); and (14) "Changes in Quality of Life due to Parent Participation in Head Start" (P.P. Holley). The monograph concludes by describing the North Carolina Central University Human Development and Family Studies program. (KDFB)

Training Head Start Coordinators for Workplace Preparedness

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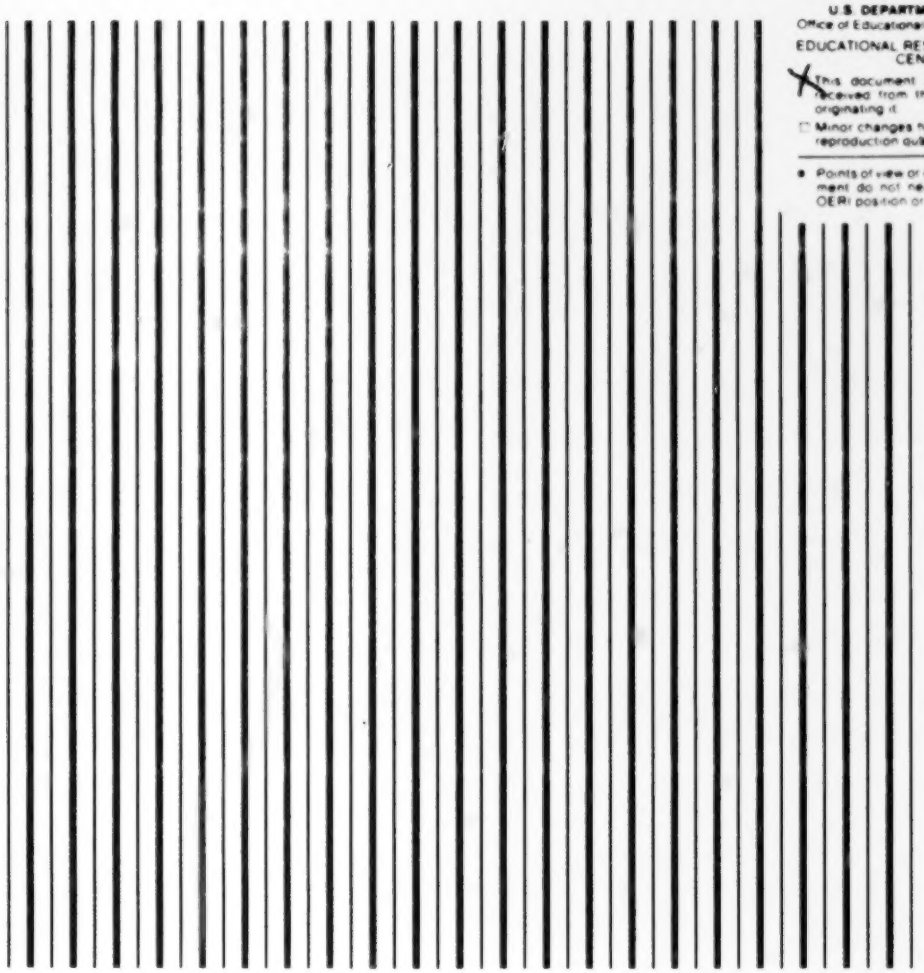

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Head Start Research in North Carolina

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FOREWORD

Since its inception, much of the strength of Head Start has been derived from the dedication and commitment of local Head Start administrators, teachers, staff and volunteers to quality programming for children and families. As stated in the executive summary of the final report of Creating a 21st Century Head Start: "The Advisory Committee believes that the quality of services must be a first priority. We should strive for excellence in all Head Start programs by focusing on staffing and career development, improving management of local programs, reengineering federal oversight to assure accountability, providing better facilities, and strengthening the role of research."

The North Carolina Central University (NCCU) Head Start Project Research Monograph is a superb example of striving for excellence. NCCU is one of six Historically Black Colleges and Universities funded by the Head Start Bureau to provide training for Head Start component coordinators and leaders. These six projects represent partnerships at their best in that both partners gain from the collaboration. All of the projects have benefitted the Head Start community by providing excellent training for Head Start staff and the colleges and universities have gained a new constituency.

North Carolina Central University has taken the partnership a step further—the Head Start coordinators attending that university have conducted fourteen field based research projects. This is a tremendous accomplishment and a testimony to the dedication of Head Start component coordinators and the commitment of the North Carolina Central University cadre of dedicated professors.

Dr. Beverly Bryant, her colleagues and the fourteen Head Start Coordinators are to be commended for a job well done.

Helen H. Taylor
Associate Commissioner
Head Start Bureau

North Carolina Central University's Head Start Project

Training Head Start Coordinators for Workplace Preparedness*

The research results summarized in this monograph are derived from the academic capstone activities of 14 graduate student scholars and their 5 graduate faculty advisors who participated in a major project funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services at North Carolina Central University under the direction of Beverly A. Bryant, Ed.D..C.F.C.S. This project supported a cohort of experienced Head Start Coordinators from North Carolina as they completed a rigorous graduate training program in early childhood education leading to the Master of Science degree. For each student participant the culminating activity of this sequence was the investigation of a significant, field based research question generated around issues consistent with the national priorities and professional practice needs of Head Start.

A great many individuals involved with Head Start are committed to the principle that practice should be based upon sound research. Unfortunately, all too often not nearly enough early childhood research is readily and reasonably applicable to the realities of practice. The project "Training Head Start Coordinators for Workplace Preparedness," funded through the Department of Human Sciences at North Carolina Central University, is one of those forward looking programs attempting to address the research-into-practice dilemma by involving experienced leadership individuals in Head Start in the definition, development, investigation, and interpretation of significant research questions related to our understanding or application of Head Start practices.

Since each of these scholars and their advisors were encouraged to develop and pursue independent avenues of research based on their individual experiences and those Head Start priorities most coinciding with their individual academic interests, the results described in this monograph are not integrated around a single theme. All, however, relate to the improvement of our understanding and application of important issues impacting early childhood practice in Head Start settings.

Five of the scholars completing this program were mentored and directed in their research by ***Dr. Beverly Bryant,*** *Project Director and Chairperson for the Department of Human Sciences (Sandra K. Gant; Dorothy Riddick Johnson; Gloria Alston; Evelyn Smith; Sandra J. Shepard).*

Sandra K. Gant's thesis, *"Multicultural Education in Head Start Programs in North Carolina,"* explored the pervasiveness and apparent impact of multicultural education curriculum materials and approaches. Moving

*** The research and other activities described in this monograph were supported by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children, Youth and Families, Washington, D.C. (Grant No. 90-CD-0953, through North Carolina Central University, Department of Human Sciences, Durham, North Carolina, September, 1993-September, 1995)**

beyond a literature which strongly suggests that the Head Start target age group possesses prime developmental potential to recognize and appreciate individual differences. Ms. Gant studied the various ways Head Start programs integrate multiculturalism into their activities and how both teachers and children perceive and are influenced by multiculturalism. She received, analyzed, and interpreted responses from 162 Head Start teachers from 32 programs representing 48 of the 100 North Carolina counties and interviewed 69 children from Head Start programs in 3 counties which used a multicultural curriculum. While 65% of the teachers sampled were African Americans, 29% European Americans, and 99% female, they were quite diverse in age and experience. Exactly half of the programs used a commercial multicultural curriculum, but all reported implementing some specific multicultural activities; 100 teachers reported implementing a "heroes and holidays" approach to multicultural education, but many used daily activities. Restriction of range in the race, gender, and age variables among children make difficult the interpretation of differences in how children viewed themselves and others, but it seems multicultural activity does promote enhanced self esteem and self concept, cultural and self awareness, and social skills. Given that her findings support and expand upon earlier literature, Ms. Gant strongly recommends that all Head Start staff be trained to implement all component operations consistent with Head Start's 10 Multicultural Principles, that the culture and ethnicity of the Head Start regions and program enrollees be careful considered in planning for daily multicultural activities, that multiculturalism be an integral element in planning for the development and enhancement of children's self esteem, socialization skills, and self awareness, and, finally, that all Head Start programs be examined to assure the implementation of multiculturalism in their curriculum.

Dorothy Riddick Johnson investigated a matter considered ultimately among the most crucial to the success and on-going financial support of Head Start programs in her thesis, "*The Impact of Head Start on Long-term Academic Achievement.*" Ms. Johnson secured, analyzed, and interpreted data from 375 high school seniors in Region 'R" of Northeastern North Carolina. The sample included 79 individuals who had been Head Start students for varying, but significant, periods of time (53 for one year, the remainder for two or more years). Of the total sample, 53% were female; 32% were white and 65% were black. Data on student perceptions of academic success, sources of academic influence, and the impact of Head Start experience were gathered using survey instrumentation. In general, the results of this research support those earlier studies which suggest that children's Head Start experience promotes both their short and long term academic and personal success. Respondents with Head Start experience report they were given a positive early start, they were better prepared to enter school, they had increased self-esteem and enhanced social skills, and they were more likely to engage in leadership activities. In each of the academic and personal domains examined, former Head Start students reported equaling or exceeding the achievement and satisfaction reported by their peers who had not attended Head Start. Particularly encouraging is the apparent tendency of former Head Start students to emphasize positive personal characteristics, community enhancing activities, employment and career goals, and a willingness to work hard to achieve their goals. While school retention rates were slightly higher for former Head Start students, retention typically took place at a very early grade while non-Head Start students were often retained in much later grades; students with Head Start experience report more daily interest in school and drop out rates were very low. Johnson cites the family involvement aspects of Head Start as a critical variable in the long term academic and personal success of children and recommends the expansion of Head Start programs to all eligible children and the provision of significantly more Parent-Child Centers to extend these positive family influences.

Gloria Reed Alston responded to literature which strongly suggests that male involvement with their children has an important correlation with a child's positive cognitive, intellectual, and social development by designing and completing an investigation of "*The Impact of Male Initiative Projects on North Carolina Head Start Programs.*" Male initiative projects are activities formally designed by Head Start programs with the specific objective of attracting and regularly involving the fathers and other significant males in the lives of Head Start children.

These projects attempt to identify the parameters of poor male involvement, to enhance male self examination and self-esteem, and to stress the positive role fathers can play in promoting healthy development of their children and families. Her research involved surveying 600 fathers or significant males of children in North Carolina Head Start programs. To gain broader insight and more generalizability of the issues, she also surveyed 237 Head Start administrators in the eight states of Region IV. Ms. Alston's results are based on 182 father and 102 Head Start administrator respondents. Of the father respondent group, 80% were Black and 13% Anglo; most were under 42 years of age, with the modal group (40%) between 26 and 33 years old; about 55% of the sample identified themselves as single. The results of the surveys strongly suggest that programs can have success in male initiative projects; nearly 50% of those involved in such projects rated participation as excellent. Unfortunately, such projects are not as regular and pervasive as their successes would seem to warrant, and their effects and participation rates seem to diminish over time. Ms. Alston indicates that her results augment the conclusions of earlier researchers in pointing to the need for more extensive and aggressive male initiative projects, more research into the dynamics which lead to declines in involvement over time, and much more emphasis on activities which assure that parental support, particularly from fathers and other significant males, follows children as they progress through school.

Evelyn Smith examined the potential gains in both efficiency and effectiveness which can be gained by the planned and thoughtful articulation of activities of human service agencies among one another and with Head Start in Craven, Jones, Pamlico, and Carteret counties. She reported her conclusions in her thesis, "*An Exploration of the Collaborative Efforts among Human Service Agencies and the Head Start Program in Four Eastern North Carolina Counties.*" Ms. Smith surveyed 25 human service agencies, 16 of which responded, and 22 Head Start staff members, including administrative workers, center managers, and family service workers, from the four county area. The survey was designed to solicit the perceptions of agencies and Head Start workers of the extent to which referrals were made and collaborative agreements were in place among agencies and Head Start in the areas of literacy, employability, substance abuse, housing, child care, and health. Clearly, contacts with Head Start were initiated by agencies most often in matters of child care (68% of agencies), with many fewer in health (32% of agencies), literacy (25% of agencies) and employability (19% of agencies) down to 0% in matters of substance abuse. As might be expected, given their relative missions, Head Start staff report relatively high rates of contact or referral by them to agencies with affirmative responses ranging from 63% to 77% in all domains except substance abuse (36% yes responses). In those instances where agencies report linkages to Head Start, most are described as informal or working agreements with very few contractual agreements; the most common of these linkages are reported to be in matters of health, child care, and literacy. When asked for preferred approaches to facilitate collaboration, agencies varied among themselves quite markedly, with the most common preference being simply to "coordinate service;"; Head Start staff, on the other hand, clearly indicate the best facilitation mechanism is to conduct meetings jointly (64%). Both agency and Head Start staff largely feel that the entire range of services is not "very available," with the one possible exception of the perception of the availability of child care among Head Start staff (54%). In general, human service staff do not find many significant formal impediments to collaboration; some feel federal rules and regulations or inadequate financing make collaboration more difficult, but they are a distinct minority. They do, however, largely agree that more staff with the responsibility to work at joint efforts would greatly facilitate collaboration. Clearly most respondents are aware of the role of Head Start in facilitating collaborative efforts (100% of Head Start staff and 87% of all respondents).

Sandra J. Shepard explored a literature which pinpointed assessment as an integral part of Head Start planning and evaluation, finding that for nearly a decade the Model Family Needs Assessment Instrument (MFNA) has been widely used by Head Start programs to help assess family needs. Combining observations derived from her professional experience and a number of emerging concerns expressed in the research literature, Ms.

Shepard completed an investigation of the perceptions of those individuals most involved in the administration of the MFNA, which she entitled *"An Evaluation of the Model Family Needs Assessment Instrument: Recommendations for Use in the State of North Carolina."* Ms. Shepard drew her sample from staff and parents who attended center committee meetings in the 45 Head Start programs throughout North Carolina. Her sample ultimately included 40 Head Start coordinators, 144 Head Start staff members, and 350 parents of Head Start children; not all respondents answered all questions. The research was conducted to determine the extent of use of the MFNA in North Carolina, to determine and describe the reaction of staff and parents who had used the instrument; and, if appropriate, to suggest possible alterations to the instrument to enhance its usefulness in planning for the progress of Head Start children. Confirming basic expectations, Shepard found that 85% of Head Start programs in North Carolina use the MFNA. Despite its widespread use, 87% of Head Start coordinators and 82% of Head Start staff members report they perceive significant limitations in the instrument, most citing its length, the time consumed in its administration, and its often repetitive content. However, only 32% of programs reported modifying the instrument. Parents were significantly more positive in their response to the MFNA. They were almost evenly split on the issue of limitations to the instrument; 78% reported no trouble with the instrument, and a majority (53%) said they never felt questions were repeated to them. Ms. Shepard's conclusions lean somewhat more heavily on the responses of coordinators and staff, reasonably arguing that staff experience multiple instances of uses of the instrument and can see the difficulties its use can cause across many different parents. She recommends that the MFNA be shortened (to no more than 3 pages), that it use more common language, that it assure an administration time of under 30 minutes per parent, and that it include both open and close-ended questions to expand the range of interpretation.

Four of the researchers completing this program were advised by ***Dr. Debra O. Parker*** *(Debra S. Lutz; Barbara B. Sherman; Doris Jackson; Frances Pauline Riddick).*

Debra S. Lutz expanded upon the research base and fundamental principles underlying most Head Start components which suggest the importance of parental involvement in advancing Head Start objectives with her thesis *"An Analysis of Parent Involvement: The Impact on Head Start Families."* Her sample included 17 Parent Involvement Coordinators and 61 Family Service Workers from 17 Head Start programs in North Carolina. Respondents completed two surveys intended to assess activities engaged in by parents and the staff perception of parental attitudes and behaviors. Subjecting the resulting data to a series of t-tests led the investigator to conclude that staff members who had themselves been Head Start parents were significantly more likely to participate in program planning and showed significantly higher overall receptivity to parent involvement than were staff who had not been Head Start parents. Additional tests suggest the education level of the teacher is largely independent of the extent of parent participation and the amount of parent involvement in planning, as is the staff role (teacher, coordinator, family service worker) and the extent of individual participation of the parents. Ms. Lutz found, also that the staff of a clear majority of programs perceive the level of parent participation to be quite low; participation levels seemed not to be much enhanced by the parent orientation efforts in which their programs engaged. Even so, most programs felt they had parents doing some volunteer work on a regular basis. Because parental involvement is viewed as promoting the academic growth of children and because the staff perceive parent participation to be encouraged more in programs which hire former Head Start parents as teachers, programs apparently are putting a priority on replacing staff with individuals who had been Head Start parents. Staff respondents did exhibit some concerns that parents who became teachers often do not very aggressively pursue further education. Finally, it seems apparent that not all components of all Head Start programs place priority on parent involvement. Lutz strongly endorses the concept of full parental participation in all components of every Head Start program, of encouraging administrative support for parent and staff training, stimulating policy formation to promote parent involvement, and of rewarding positive actions by teachers and other Head Start staff who develop and nurture strong relationships with parents to facilitate the academic and personal growth of Head Start children.

Doris Jackson reminds us in her thesis, *"An Analysis of Head Start Support Programs for Contemporary and Future Families,"* that although among the literally thousands of federally supported programs Head Start has been noted as one of the most responsive to evolving needs of children and families, there are many features of the program which must continue to change if it is to remain a vital force. Ms. Jackson's research involved 66 Head Start program administrators from Region IV, 6 parents of former Head Start students and 5 grandparents of present Head Start students in the Economic Improvement Council, Edenton, North Carolina. Administrators were questioned using a mailed questionnaire with a follow-up, while the parents and grandparents were interviewed by telephone. Parents and grandparents included all who could be contacted from an original list of 25 identified in the target area. The investigator reported a general tone among respondents which suggested negative changes in the value systems of society. Administrators, parents, and grandparents emphasized the chilling effects of increased violence. Administrators cited the moderate positive effects of improvements in child health care and the Americans With Disabilities Act. Both groups expressed fundamental agreement that the Head Start programs which are most effective in meeting the needs of families include Family Literacy, Child Literacy, Transition, and Parent-Child Center. A composite of the varied suggestions for enhancing services within the present structure includes extending the Head Start day and operating classrooms during the summer, implementing programs for teenage family members, and providing emergency financial assistance. Ms. Jackson completes her analysis with a vision for a model program for the coming century which includes Head Start owned facilities with technology-based classrooms; the requirement that all teachers hold Birth through Kindergarten (B-K) certification and that all programs be nationally accredited; the stipulation that parent involvement be mandated as an element of participation, and that Preschool Parent-Teacher Associations be established, the design and support of an extensive parent and student transportation system, and the formation of a major public information and relations campaign to include regular, required town meetings held by each Head Start site; raised federal poverty levels; year-round and full-day classes serving children birth to kindergarten; and funding for emergency support for families until other agency support can be accessed. Jackson's thesis concludes with a set of recommendations aimed at beginning an implementation phase for this model.

Barbara B. Sherman chose to investigate the adequacy of the response of Head Start programs to the needs of young children as they develop socially in her research, *"Increasing Social Competence in Young Children."* Using a respondent sample of 61 component coordinators (of an original pool of 209) from 14 of the 45 Head Start programs in North Carolina, Ms. Sherman analyzed and interpreted responses to a survey instrument containing both Likert-type and open-ended questions. Chi-square analyses indicated no significant correspondence between the types of in-service planned and implemented and the extent to which teachers use direct instruction to teach social skills to children, nor was teacher age apparently related to the extent to which teachers emphasize social competence. There was, however, a strong indication that the higher the level of training achieved by the teacher the more probable it was that the teacher would emphasize social competence. Clearly coordinators believe teachers actively pursue social development agendas, with 95% agreeing that teachers plan and implement daily activities to encourage social competence in young children, and only 12% indicating that social competence was not an integral part of the instructional program. Nearly all respondents agree that teachers model effective social behavior for children (93%) and that they use direct instruction to teach appropriate social skills (93%); 75% of the coordinators agree with the contention that increasing social competence is the major goal of Head Start programs. Respondents were, however, about evenly split on the issue of whether parents were informed on a regular basis about their child's social development. Sherman recommends that the strong base of support in Head Start for promoting social development in young children be expanded to include all components of all programs, to extend both pre-service and in-service training in social competence development for all prospective teachers and other Head Start workers, to create and implement more effective communication and training opportunities in child social development for parents, and to use the extended Head Start family as a

channel to promote advocacy for emphasizing child social competence.

Frances Pauline Riddick, extending the significant Head Start literature which documents the beneficial effects of early intervention, investigated the issue of *"Inclusion of Infants and Toddlers in Head Start Programs."* Of the 45 Head Start directors in North Carolina, 30 responded to a survey soliciting both Likert-type and open-ended response related to the availability of infant and toddler programs, the desirability of such programs, the factors which affect their implementation, strategies to transition to infant/toddler programs, and impediments to their formulation. Of the 30 responding directors, only 5 reported programs which included infants and toddlers, one of which was designed to serve migrant children. Riddick's data suggest some dramatic dichotomies in the perception of directors of programs with infants and toddlers (PCC programs) and those without such programs (non-PCC programs). While there was virtually unanimous agreement among all respondents that very early intervention programs are important and beneficial, directors of PCC programs show strikingly more concern for the effect of adding such programs to current Head Start structures. Nearly all non-PCC directors (96%) believe the addition of infants and toddlers would not adversely affect their current structure, while virtually all of the PCC director sample expressed concerns about the magnitude and nature of restructuring needed to accommodate the change. The vast majority of both groups recognize that such a change would require different management strategies (100% of PCC; 88% of non-PCC), and most recognize the need for adequate staff development to serve the extended population. Over half of the non-PCC program directors (52%) report concerns about the adequacy of facility space to accommodate infants and toddlers given their current program. The directors of PCC programs provided substantial insight into needs to be addressed in moving Head Start to an infant/toddler client model. These include the need for significant inter-agency cooperation, lowered staff-child ratios, more staff training, better facilities and funding, and adoption of a case management approach to child and family services. Non-PCC directors expressed quite similar concerns, many revolving around the need for resources, staff training, program planning, and the development and adoption of new and improved procedures for working with such young children and their families. Riddick's data, combined with an analysis of the dominant themes in the literature, led her to recommend that all North Carolina Head Start programs should be required and funded to serve children from birth to age five; that teaching staff be required to have earned at least a B.S. in Early Childhood Education, with teacher assistants needing at least an appropriate A.A. degree and substitutes a CDA; that all administrative and field staff complete regular advanced in-service and continuing education from accredited programs; and that intensive research be conducted to identify family needs to be included in the design of the new services.

***Dr. Magnoria Lunsford** advised and directed the research of two of the graduate students completing M.S. degree requirements through this project (Margaret Louise Harris; Maddie Fuller Davis).*

Margaret Louise Harris investigated the on-going impact of Head Start experience on children as they move into school in her thesis, *"Head Start Children and their Academic Achievement through First Grade."* Subjects in her study included 123 kindergarten children, including 18 who had been Head Start students, and 137 first-grade students, including 35 former Head Start students, from two elementary schools in Warren County, North Carolina. These subjects were volunteers from an original pool of 350 students whose parents were asked to provide research participation permission slips. The subjects comprised 48% females and 52% males. Of the subjects, 82% were African American and 18% were Caucasians. Data were also gathered from 11 teachers of the students in the sample. Students who had attended Head Start were compared to their peers who had no Head Start experience, using a composite achievement score composed of grades in communications, mathematics, social studies, and science (5 point range from excellent to unsatisfactory). T-tests comparing mean grade averages suggested no significant difference in the performance of the two groups at either grade level. It was noted that most students in both groups were performing quite well academically. A chi-square analysis indicated that gender and race were not

related to the probability of Head Start enrollment in the sample studied, although it should be noted that range restriction on the race variable was prominent. Analyses comparing mean grade averages using t-tests suggest that at both grade levels, males perform slightly, but statistically significantly, better than females. Finally, chi-square analyses indicated that race was not related to grade score averages. Teacher data were quite consistent for kindergarten and first-grade teachers, with most supporting multiple teaching strategies, the importance of respect for cultural diversity and for sensitivity to children's needs, and the responsibility of teachers to organize and manage an environment which provides direction and security for children.

Maddie Fuller Davis chose to extend the literature on parent involvement by investigating *"Teachers' Attitude and its Effect on Parental Participation in Head Start Programs in North Carolina."* Davis surveyed a simple random sample of 200 teachers from 44 Region IV Head Start programs in North Carolina using a 24 item Likert-type scale. Of those surveyed, 104 responded, 95% of whom were female; about 75% were African American. Degree status of respondents varied widely from GED to a Master's degree, with the clear modal response being "some college;" about 20% report having obtained CDA credentials. Respondents were about evenly split on the issue of whether parental presence in the classroom has a positive effect on child behavior, and most are not more uncomfortable (70%) when parents are in the classroom. Most do not see parental presence as an actual disruptive influence. Nearly all felt parents should be able, and encouraged, to express their feelings about their expectations of the education program; and most teachers did feel parents need some, but perhaps not significant training to play a role in the classroom. Most respondents disagree that children's success decreases as parents become involved, that parents are not sufficiently educated to make contributions, and that parental presence in the class interferes with the teacher-child relationship. Nearly all (86%) believe opportunities should be taken to use parents in their children's instruction. Using t-test analyses, Davis reports a significant relationship between education levels and teachers' attitudes toward parental participation, between teachers' attitudes and parental participation, and between teachers' attitudes and strategies used to maintain active parental participation; no such significant relationship was shown between teachers' attitudes and parental contribution toward the education of their children. Ms. Davis interprets her results to suggest that Head Start staff and administrators need to develop and implement strategies to improve teachers' attitudes toward parent participation in Head Start programs, to encourage teachers to enroll in presently existing activities focusing on teacher involvement in developing parent participation, and to recognize and reward teachers for their efforts at promoting parent involvement.

***Dr. Janeen Witty** directed the program and thesis development for two of the graduate students completing the M.S. degree through the project (Gertha Mae Bond; Patricia Byrd Banks).*

Gertha Mae Bond's research responds to the very contemporary and significant issues raised in public care and educational settings by the increasing spread of blood borne pathogens. Her investigation, *"The Knowledge and Attitudes of Head Start Staff and Parents toward Children with Blood Borne Pathogens,"* sought to determine the ability of Head Start staff and parents to identify blood borne pathogens, to assess their knowledge and attitudes related to these pathogens, and to gain insight into the elements needed for developing a training module for both groups. The sample from which data were gathered included 90 Head Start staff and 38 Head Start parents who responded to the nearly 800 surveys included in registration packets at the 1995 North Carolina Head Start Association Conference; nearly all subjects were female with only 3 identifiable as males (4 respondents did not identify their gender). While respondents had some difficulties in producing free-response definitions of such terms as A.I.D.S., H.I.V., and hepatitis B, they were pretty uniformly able to describe the symptoms, transmission, common misconceptions about, and effects of the pathogens. When asked to provide specific responses to health policy matters, significant numbers of parents and staff were knowledgeable of clean-up precautions, but nearly 30% of each group did not know recommended disposal methods. Parents and staff both showed considerable disagreement within their groups about attitudes toward children with blood

borne pathogens; nearly half of each group disagreed that A.I.D.S. could be transmitted by a bite and whether a bitten child would need a blood test. The groups were similarly split on the issue of informing all staff of the H.I.V. status of children. A clear majority disagreed that staff should refuse emergency care to an infected child; about half agreed to the concept of H.I.V. testing of adults who work with preschool children. Coupled with responses to other items, the investigator concluded that parents and staff are fundamentally quite knowledgeable about blood borne pathogens, but that some basic training seems warranted. In a series of questions related to attitudes toward children whose health or behavioral status might raise concerns about blood borne pathogens, parents and staff largely agreed with each other and exhibited fundamentally supportive and nurturing attitudes toward such children; still some uncertainties and insecurities suggest to the researcher that more training is desirable. Ms. Bonds provides a reasonably detailed set of recommendations for designing a training program to accomplish these goals.

Patricia Byrd Banks surveyed parents of children attending the 5 Parent Child Center (PCC) programs included among the 45 Head Start Centers as the data base for her thesis *"Parents' Perceptions of the Parent Child Centers in North Carolina."* Respondents included 92 parents ranging from 14-43 years of age, 96% of whom were female. A 43 item questionnaire, including both Likert-type and open-ended questions, was used to solicit parent perceptions of the usefulness of parenting classes, and of the impact and quality of the PCC program and the G.E.D. classes which were available to parents; and to assess the desired level of involvement and strategies for involvement of fathers. Ms. Banks found strong support for the usefulness (95%) and the positive effect on parents (92%) of the parenting skills classes; in fact, the vast majority (92%) would highly recommend the program to other parents and report feeling comfortable at the Center. All participants in G.E.D. classes supported their appropriateness and role in forwarding their efforts to obtain the diploma. Respondents were about evenly split on the issue of desiring more involvement between their children and the children's fathers (44%), but most thought the father-child relationship was very important; respondents suggested that more stereotypically male activities and more accessible, after work or week-end events might encourage more male participation. Banks recommends that Head Start leverage the exceptionally high regard in which PCC activities are held by parents by conducting very regular evaluations, as well as long term follow-up assessments, and by reporting the results in aggressive marketing ways to funding agencies, policy-makers, and new prospective parent participants. These evaluations could also, of course, form the basis for modifications in program activities and serve as a communication mechanism with parents. Her respondents suggested a number of additions and alterations to adult activities which might improve their usefulness, including more individualized instruction in mathematics and English, and the inclusion of some practical life-skills such as driver's license acquisition.

Dr. Gbasay A. Rogerson *directed the program and research for one student completing the M.S. degree through this project, Patricia P. Holley.*

Patricia P. Holley investigated some demographic and community activity correlates of active participation by parents in Head Start programs and reported her results in a thesis entitled *"Changes in Quality of Life due to Parent Participation in Head Start."* Ms. Holley surveyed the parents of 500 children enrolled in the Duplin, Onslow, and Pender (DOP) Head Start program in Jacksonville, North Carolina. After a follow-up, 254 completed surveys were returned (51%). The sample was largely composed of females (234 individuals, plus 4 couples or no gender response), and only 46 individuals describe themselves as non-participators in Head Start activities (18%). About half the sample are single parent mothers and this rate is stable across the Head Start experience years. Chi-square analyses between self-identified participators and non-participators suggest no stable differences exist in education or gender, but there may be some differences in employment status. Further analyses indicate no fundamental relationship between participation and such variables as number of children in household, county of origin, number of children in Head Start, income status, housing status or transportation status. Most encouraging, however, is the researcher's discovery that 70% of respondents indicated that their families had changed for the

better since their children enrolled in Head Start, with 35% of all respondents stating that this change for the better was a "great change." When asked to identify the sources of these positive changes a substantial range of responses was provided, but clearly the most frequent related directly to positive effects on the children, including behavior, sharing, and learning. Holley recommends that manuals and guidelines be developed and improved to teach parents the importance of volunteering and to suggest avenues for increased parental participation; she suggests, also, extending the data base on these issues well beyond one community in one state.

While the research detailed throughout this monograph was designed and carried out by independent investigators exploring quite different questions, their work with the related literature, their data, and their interpretations intersect in ways which present a consistent and coherent view and vision for Head Start. The view, of course, is of Head Start in North Carolina in 1995; it is composed of nurturing, caring, committed Head Start administrators, coordinators, teachers, aides, staff, and volunteers. It is fashioned with young children and families who have been given hope and opportunity where none might have existed before. It is testimony to the successes which modest investments can achieve when expectations are high, missions are clear, evaluations are fair and consistent, and no one who should rightfully be involved is denied access to the process. It is a place where children can gain skills, self-confidence and a sense of worth, while feeling and being cared for, secure, healthy, and valued. As our scholars remind us, Head Start children go on to succeed, and their families often progress with them. These researchers point, also, to a vision well beyond 1995 and North Carolina. They see and show us a place and a time in our future when all children, from birth, will receive the nutrition, health care, security, skill enhancement, and social, mental and academic support which ultimately foster the conditions for real competence. We are told we need more and better quality training for teachers and staff; we need larger and higher quality facilities; we need more intensive involvement from families; and, especially from the males in these families, we need more articulation among all service providers; we need to expand the pool of children we allow to participate; and we need to make access to programs easy, affordable, and attractive. Our research clearly suggests that these comparatively small investments hold our best hope of developing our children into citizens who are satisfied with themselves and with their lives, and who will be ready and willing to lead a nation that needs and deserves the advantages of their contributions.

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North Carolina Central University
Department of Human Sciences

Human Development and Family Studies

North Carolina Central University (NCCU) is a comprehensive university, and is one of the 16 constituent institutions of the University of North Carolina system. Degrees are awarded through five schools: The College of Arts and Sciences, the School of Business, the School of Education, the School of Law and the School of Library and Information Sciences. The first three schools award undergraduate and master's degrees, while the School of Law awards the Juris Doctor degree and the School of Library and Information Sciences awards master's degrees in both fields.

NCCU was founded in 1910 by Dr. James E. Shepard as the National Religious Training School and Chautauqua, a non-sectarian school to train black men and women for leadership roles in society and the church. The institution became a state normal college in 1922, and in 1925, the N.C. General Assembly made North Carolina College for Negroes the nation's first state-supported liberal arts college for black people. In 1969, the name of the school was changed to North Carolina Central University. NCCU is located in Durham, the eastern section of North Carolina's Piedmont, within the world-famous Research Triangle.

Today, North Carolina Central University enrolls more than 5,000 students. Eighty-five percent of NCCU's enrollment is African-American, with proportions ranging from less than 10 percent white at the undergraduate level to approximately 50 percent white in the School of Law and the School of Library and Information Sciences. Like the other public universities in North Carolina, NCCU enrolls some 85 percent of its student from within the state.

The graduate program with a major in Human Development and Family Studies at North Carolina Central University is housed in the Department of Human Sciences within the College of Arts and Sciences. The program offers curricula which integrates Science, Technology, the Arts, Public Policy, Cultural Diversity, and Research to enhance the quality of life for individuals and families throughout life in their communities. The program is flexible and attempts to meet the interest and career goals of individuals with varied academic backgrounds. Courses in early childhood education, family development, curriculum, evaluation, gerontology, special populations, technology, counseling and research are among the choices for students to design their individual programs. The program requires 36 semester hours of course work; a statistics course to satisfy the language requirement; successfully passing a comprehensive examination and the completion of a thesis in fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Science Degree.

The Department also offers undergraduate programs in four academic areas: Family and Consumer Sciences Education, Foods and Nutrition, Child Development and Family Relations, and Textiles and Apparel.

North Carolina Central University is committed to extending its knowledge base to the communities it serves by offering accessible undergraduate and graduate education training for non-traditional students who normally would not further their education, but need education and training to improve their workplace competency.

For further information about the Department of Human Sciences program offerings, please contact:

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